

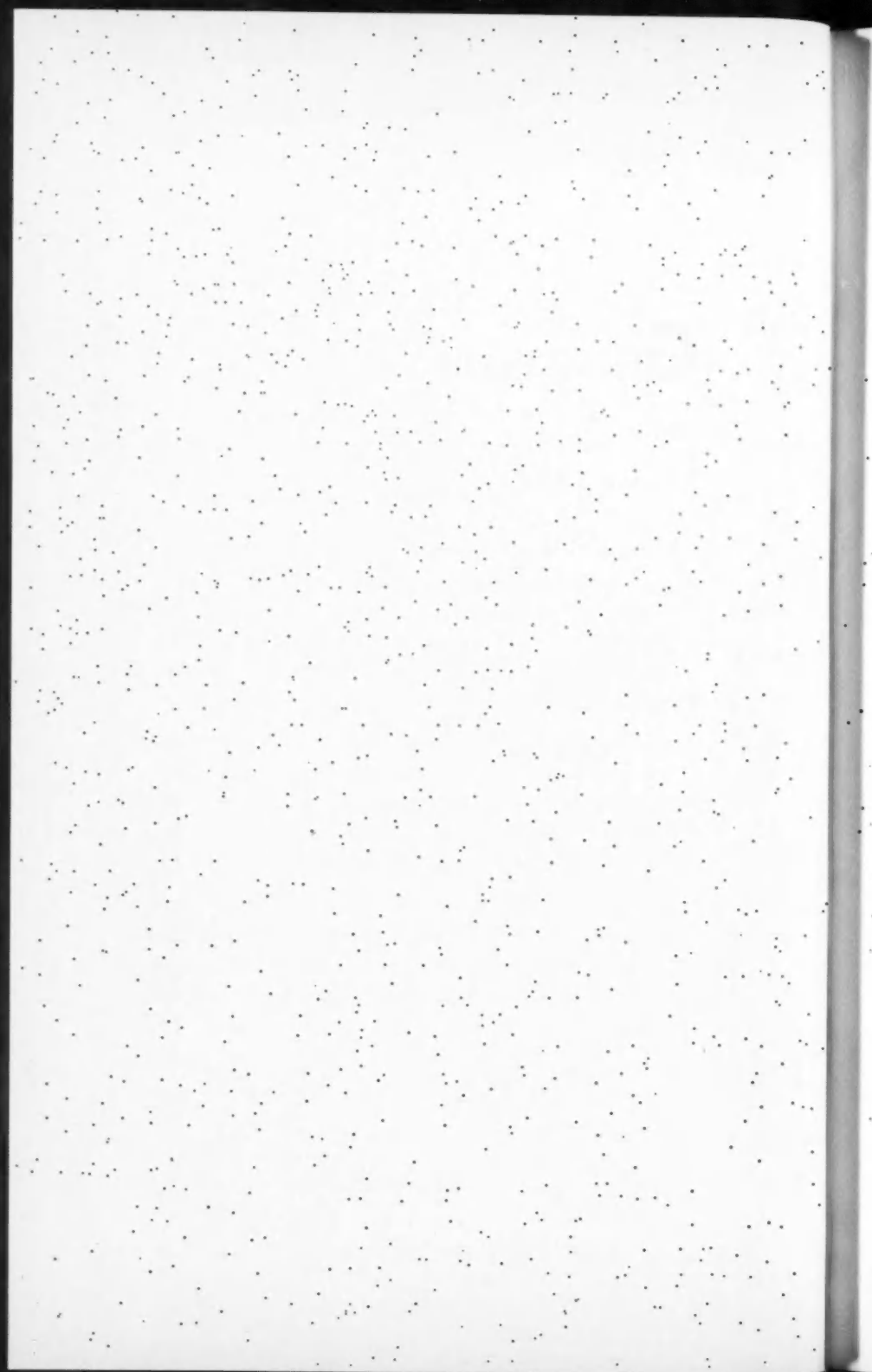
# **G**ERMAN ELECTION, 1957

by

**Martin Packman**

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**Aug. 21**  
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## GERMAN ELECTION, 1957

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AS THE VOTERS of West Germany get ready to go to the polls on Sept. 15 to elect a new federal legislature; leaders of the world's two great power blocs await the outcome with keenest interest. The strategic position, industrial strength, and developing military strength of the Federal Republic make it potentially the most powerful nation on the continent of Europe west of the Iron Curtain. As such, the make-up of its government is a matter of greatest importance to both the free world and the Communist world. The United States has gone out of its way, in a discreet manner, to do what it can to assure the continuance in power of Chancellor Konrad Adenauer and his Christian Democrats, who have proved staunch allies of the West. The Soviet Union has made clear its hope that the Adenauer government will be replaced by a regime more amenable to overtures from the East.

The opposition Social Democratic (Socialist) Party, headed by Erich Ollenhauer, has long insisted that Moscow must be approached with more understanding if divided Germany ever is to be reunited. The party's spokesmen in the current campaign have been accusing the Adenauer government of not trying hard enough to bring about reunification. If the Socialists should win the election, they could be expected to attempt to effect some change in Germany's position in the Western alliance—just how great a change is not clear. Consequently, a Socialist victory or near victory would in all probability make it necessary to re-evaluate Germany's role as the forward bastion of NATO.

### U.S. EFFORTS TO PROMOTE AN ADENAUER VICTORY

To help the Christian Democrats, Washington has made Adenauer and other high German officials welcome in this country; both independently and in conjunction with its allies, it has assured Bonn of unflagging support for reuni-

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fication; and it has made known its intention to seek the consent of Congress to return German assets seized during World War II. When Foreign Minister Heinrich von Brentano came to Washington early last March, he and Secretary of State Dulles together declared reunification of Germany to be a "fundamental objective of the policies of their governments."

In an effort to buoy confidence in the North Atlantic alliance, and to counter Socialist belief that West Germany's membership in NATO hinders reunification, the North Atlantic Council held its regular ministerial meeting last spring in Bonn.<sup>1</sup> It there directed attention, May 7, to the "inhumanity of the continued division of the German people" and reaffirmed the determination of NATO's member states to "intensify the common policy for the restoration of Germany as a free and united state."

At the conclusion of Chancellor Adenauer's annual spring trip to Washington, President Eisenhower joined him in seeking to allay German fears that the United States and the Soviet Union might conclude a disarmament agreement which would perpetuate the division of Germany. A communique on May 28 voiced the conviction of the two leaders that "a comprehensive disarmament agreement . . . must necessarily presuppose a prior solution of the problem of German reunification." The communique noted also that the President had "assured the Chancellor that the United States does not intend to take any action in the field of disarmament which would prejudice the reunification of Germany."

The so-called Berlin Declaration of July 29 contained a detailed statement of Allied policy on reunification. The document, signed by the American, British, and French ambassadors to West Germany and by Foreign Minister von Brentano, was the first joint public declaration on the unity problem by the Big Three and the Federal Republic. It stressed anew the long-standing Western formula for reunification by means of free elections.

The White House on July 31 released a "statement of intention" in which the Eisenhower administration said it planned to ask Congress early next year to reimburse German owners of property seized by the United States

<sup>1</sup> The Social Democrats protested that holding the meeting in Bonn constituted the "greatest interference yet by foreign powers in the federal election campaign."

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during the war. The statement added that the administration's proposal would provide an "equitable monetary return to former owners of vested assets." Because the term "owners" was believed to include German corporations as well as individuals, the statement indicated a reversal of earlier policy; the government formerly had favored return of alien property only to individuals.<sup>2</sup>

#### OUTLOOK FOR PRESENT REGIME'S RETURN TO POWER

Most informed observers think that Adenauer and the Christian Democrats, barring some unforeseen development in the remaining weeks of the campaign, will come out on top in the September election. The Chancellor's popularity, which had declined after establishment of diplomatic relations with the Soviet Union in September 1955, was boosted last autumn by the savage Russian suppression of the Hungarian uprising; many Germans who had lost confidence in Adenauer realized that his pro-Western policies had been justified.

The Chancellor has dominated the campaign up to now. Declaring that the issue is between Christianity and Communism, he has carried the attack to the opposition in vigorous speeches. The opposition's tactics to date have proved no match for Adenauer's forceful campaigning. Perhaps most important of all, German voters have fared well during the eight years of the Adenauer regime and will feel inclined to return the government under which they have prospered.

According to late public opinion polls, however, about 20 per cent of the voters still have not made up their minds. Last-minute developments might affect how they—as well as the rest of the electorate—vote. One such possible development is some decisive turn in the German-Soviet conversations now going on in Moscow on trade relations and repatriation. The negotiations, begun July 22, have been brought to a standstill twice in a month by Red refusal to discuss repatriation of 80,000 Germans who, the Bonn government contends, are refused permission to leave the U.S.S.R.<sup>3</sup> But neither side seems to want a complete break before the election in Germany.

<sup>2</sup> See "Alien Property," *E.R.R.*, Vol. II 1955, pp. 653-670.

<sup>3</sup> The Germans consist mainly of (1) persons who lived in eastern provinces of Germany overrun by Soviet forces late in the war, (2) residents of the Baltic states, Poland and other areas who were granted German nationality under the Nazi-Soviet pact of 1939, and (3) persons born in the Soviet Union of German parents.

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### COMPOSITION OF BUNDESTAG ON EVE OF 1957 ELECTION

Party	Seats	Per cent of total seats
Christian Democratic-Christian Social Union	253	51%
German-Free People's	32	6
Coalition	285	57
Social Democratic	153	31
Free Democratic	37	8
Refugee	19	4
Others	3	
Opposition	212	43
Total	497	100

In any event, many observers expect the electoral race to be much closer than the 1953 contest, in which the Chancellor's forces polled nearly one-half of the votes cast. In the last campaign Adenauer could point proudly to Germany's phenomenal recovery under his leadership; that accomplishment, though no less real today, is four years older. For another thing, a decline in the strength of Germany's small political parties, and the accompanying progression toward a two-party system, may have helped the opposition Social Democrats more than Adenauer's Christian Democrats. Outlawing of the Communist Party last year, for example, may have put the Social Democrats in line to gain the support of the two per cent of the electorate who voted Communist in 1953.

If the Christian Democrats win by a narrow margin, the government formed after the election probably will have to be another coalition. Adenauer's task in that respect may be more difficult than in 1953. On taking office four years ago, the Chancellor was able to form a coalition in which all parties except the Social Democratic participated; he thus achieved a two-thirds majority in the Bundestag, the lower house of Parliament. Since then, however, two of the minor parties have left the coalition, and the Christian Democrats now are supported by only two other small parties.

#### SPECULATION ABOUT SUCCESSOR TO AGED CHANCELLOR

A third Adenauer victory would make more urgent than ever the question of who is eventually to succeed the old Chancellor. *Der Alte*, as he is known, apparently has recovered completely from the severe attack of pneumonia suffered late in 1955, but he will be 82 years old next

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January. Adenauer has designated no political heir. In view of the evident unconcern of German voters about his advanced age, the chances are that he will not do so, certainly not before the election.

A Swiss expert on Germany, F. R. Allemann of the Zurich *Tat*, has explained Adenauer's attitude in these terms:

Adenauer is known to regard himself as the guarantor against any German relapse into rabid nationalism, a kind of faithful shepherd seeing to it that the German people never again go astray. A man harboring so high a conception of his mission does not willingly . . . set a time limit for its accomplishment. And if he feels himself to be irreplaceable, he must experience a tightening at the heart to think that some day power must slip from his hands . . .

Adenauer is wise and experienced enough to know . . . his authority . . . cannot be passed on, either by yielding his place to a successor . . . or by naming a political heir for the future. Only a politician of real stature who struck the public as a "natural" candidate could effectively claim Adenauer's legacy—and such a politician is nowhere in sight at present in Bonn. And if he were, he would not need to deck himself in the mantle of an authority handed down from the present incumbent of the chancellorship.<sup>4</sup>

Foreign Minister von Brentano, said to be the most popular man in the Christian Democratic Party after the Chancellor, often has been considered a likely successor. Brentano, now 53, reportedly is a favorite of Adenauer. Defense Minister Franz-Joseph Strauss, at 41 the youngest member of the cabinet, is a powerful orator, clever parliamentarian, and daring politician, and is felt by many to be the man to watch.

### QUESTION OF WEST GERMANY'S FUTURE WITHOUT ADENAUER

Consideration of a successor to Adenauer gives rise to the question of what will happen to his program and to democratic institutions in West Germany once he is gone. The extent to which the government organization and political attitude of the Federal Republic are dependent solely on the present Chancellor has been termed excessive by a number of foreign critics. Allemann has asserted that "The practical politics of the Bonn Republic's first, formative years have been completely dominated by Adenauer as the center around which all federal institutions turn and the reference point for every activity." Allemann

<sup>4</sup> F. R. Allemann, "West Germany's Democratic Future—After Adenauer What?" *Commentary*, January 1956, p. 53.

has conceded that the arrangement "works well enough . . . but only as long as the hand at the controls is strong and steady."<sup>5</sup>

Other critics have asserted that Adenauer's wide-ranging exercise of executive power has stunted the growth of the Legislative Branch. Moreover, it is alleged that as a result of the Chancellor's personal rule, a powerful "kitchen cabinet" has emerged. Not responsible to the Bundestag, it reportedly makes policy decisions without consulting the appropriate ministries. On the other hand, the Chancellor's defenders deny that his cabinet and coalition have become mere rubber stamps.

Richard C. Hottelet, a Columbia Broadcasting System correspondent, has written that "The Parliament, the press, the political parties, the trade unions, and above all the individual citizen have shown proof of genuine political growth." Hottelet concluded that "However patriarchal . . . [Adenauer's] rule and haughty his 'solitary decisions,' however contemptuous he may be of his colleagues and his contemporaries, . . . [he] has helped to introduce or to anchor in German life certain attributes which have stabilized democracy."<sup>6</sup>

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### Election Rules, Parties, and Platforms

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ABOUT 30 million voters—out of an electorate of 35 million—are expected to go to the polls in West Germany in mid-September. Among them, they will elect the nearly 500 members of the Bundestag,<sup>7</sup> who in turn elect a Chancellor.<sup>8</sup> The Federal Republic's electoral system combines direct choice of candidates by majority vote with a scheme of proportional representation. Each citizen has two votes. He casts one vote directly for a candidate running in his district and so expresses preference for a specific person. The second vote is cast for a list of candidates representing

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 54.

<sup>6</sup> Richard C. Hottelet, "Adenauer's Achievement: Germany Grows Up," *New Leader*, July 2, 1956, pp. 10-12.

<sup>7</sup> The Bundestag includes also 22 voteless observers from West Berlin's municipal parliament. Members of the Bundesrat, the Federal Republic's upper house, are appointed by the state governments.

<sup>8</sup> Adenauer was elected Chancellor in 1949 by a margin of only one vote, his own, but in 1953 he was given a majority of more than 150 votes.



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a particular party in the *Land*, or state, in which the voter resides. One-half of the members of the Bundestag are elected directly from the districts, of which there are 247, and one-half through party lists in the ten *Laender* of the Federal Republic.

Bundestag seats are assigned to the parties in direct ratio to the votes they receive as evidenced by ballots cast for the *Land* lists. For example, if a party polls three million votes in a total of nine million cast in a *Land* with 150 districts, it gets 50 seats in the Bundestag. Because a party may occupy only the number of seats to which it is entitled by the proportional strength of the vote it receives, the candidates directly elected by the first votes must be included in the number elected by the second votes. To be represented in the Bundestag, a party either must have directly elected winners in at least three districts, or must poll at least five per cent of all valid votes in the entire Federal Republic.

The rules on apportionment of seats are designed to prevent emergence of numerous splinter parties too weak to constitute either a stable government or a responsible opposition. Under the prevailing system, such groups either are eliminated or are forced to merge with stronger organizations.

### CAMPAIGN PLATFORM OF THE CHRISTIAN DEMOCRATS

The present government party, the Christian Democratic Union—together with its Bavarian affiliate, the Christian Social Union—has been the most popular party in West Germany since formation of the Federal Republic. It polled 31 per cent of the total vote in 1949 and 45 per cent in 1953. The C.D.U. is a middle-of-the-road party whose membership comprises a broad cross section of the population—Protestants, Catholics, trade unionists, conservatives, advocates of a strong central government; proponents of state rights. Adenauer has been its chairman from the beginning.

In the current election campaign the C.D.U. is running mainly on accomplishments of its eight-year period of power—in the international sphere: restoration of West Germany from an occupied territory to an independent, equal, and powerful state; in the domestic sphere: achievement of prosperity, full employment, lower taxes, higher

wages, better pensions, and improved welfare services.<sup>9</sup> The government party is telling the voters that such accomplishments will be endangered if it is defeated in the election. As Chancellor Adenauer said in an Aug. 5 radio broadcast: "What I have, I know. What would come, I don't know. Therefore, I stick to those things that have proved themselves. I am sure that the German voter recognizes this and will do the right thing."

In foreign policy Adenauer's party favors European integration, controlled disarmament, and reunification of Germany on the basis of free elections. It is firmly committed to continued West German membership in the North Atlantic Treaty Organization. In his campaign speeches Adenauer has charged that the Social Democrats will take West Germany out of NATO if they win. At Nuremberg last month he declared that a Socialist victory would "mean the downfall of Germany."

In domestic policy the C.D.U. holds to the philosophy of a "social free-enterprise" economy, which calls for free development of markets with due consideration for both private initiative and social progress. The government—and many foreign observers—give that philosophy, as implemented by Economics Minister Ludwig Erhard, much credit for Germany's postwar recovery. The Christian Democrats counsel both management and labor to be moderate in their demands.<sup>10</sup> They have promised to enhance the security of lower-income groups by making it possible for persons to acquire their own homes and also to buy so-called "people's shares," which are to be issued by certain enterprises already run by the state, such as the Volkswagen works. The Christian Democrats are opposed to additional nationalization of industry.

#### CHALLENGE OF THE SOCIAL DEMOCRATIC OPPOSITION

The Social Democratic Party, or S.P.D., as it is more commonly known after the initials of its German name, has been the second strongest force in West German politics since the end of the war. A pure Marxist group when founded in 1867, it has developed into a Socialist organiza-

<sup>9</sup> Increases in wages, old age pensions, and social insurance benefits which went into effect last April will raise the purchasing power of employees and beneficiaries by an estimated \$2.8 million a year.

<sup>10</sup> Although West Germany has resisted recent inflationary pressures better than most nations, the government early this year pointed to inflation as the most immediate threat to prosperity. The cost of living in the Federal Republic rose three per cent in 1956, but in recent months prices have remained fairly stable.

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tion on the lines of the British Labor Party. Although it has attracted an increasing number of middle-class supporters, it is still essentially a working-class party. The S.P.D. won about 29 per cent of the popular vote in both 1949 and 1953. Since the death of Kurt Schumacher, in 1952, it has been headed by Erich Ollenhauer. He has announced that the party's objective in the current campaign is to "put an end to the Adenauer era."

The Socialists have concentrated their fire on the Chancellor's weakest point, his failure to reunify Germany. Maintaining that reunification should be the supreme objective of West German foreign policy, they charge that nothing can be expected on that score from the Adenauer government. The standard Western formula for achieving the reunion of the two Germanys, they contend, is outmoded and non-negotiable. They propose the conclusion instead of an all-European security pact in which a reunited Germany would take its place. Because they believe that West German membership in NATO has hampered progress toward reunification, they would be prepared to discuss withdrawal from the alliance once Germany had been unified and a general security system established.

The Social Democrats favor European integration and voted with the C.D.U. to approve the common market and Euratom treaties. They support all efforts for worldwide disarmament and oppose stockpiling of atomic weapons in either West or East Germany. Objecting to organization of a large German army, they favor abolition of conscription and creation of a small professional force composed solely of volunteers.

Whereas in foreign policy the S.P.D. is pressing for a new approach, in the domestic sphere it maintains that, far from reversing the government's economic policies, it would go them one better. Leaving Marxist dogma far behind, the Socialists have come out for free economic development, free competition, and responsible private ownership. They favor tariff cuts to expand imports and hold down prices and a stronger cartel law to prevent abuses by market-dominating groups.<sup>11</sup>

The S.P.D. believes generally in nationalization of basic

<sup>11</sup> The Bundestag on July 4 enacted a cartel law outlawing agreements which limit free competition, but the legislation, to become effective Jan. 1, 1958, has been criticized for a large number of legal loopholes.

industries, but that policy is not set forth explicitly in its platform, presumably because it might prove distasteful to prospective coalition partners. The Socialist program says only that the coal mining and atomic energy industries should be "placed under democratic control, as the foundation of prosperity for all."

MINOR PARTIES IN GERMANY: FREE DEMOCRATS

The Free Democratic Party, third largest political group in West Germany, was founded in 1945 under the leadership of Theodor Heuss, now President of the Federal Republic. Although organized primarily as a liberal party, it has attracted many conservatives. Descended from the liberal German Democratic Party of the Weimar Republic, the group has moved far to the right of its forebear; it now draws most of its strength from small business elements and certain managerial groups.

In 1949 the F.D.P. won 12 per cent of the total vote, but four years later only 10 per cent. It is potentially in a position of power out of all proportion to its fairly limited numbers. If the coming election turns out to be as close as many observers anticipate, and neither the Adenauer forces nor the Socialists are able to form a government alone, the F.D.P. may be in position to determine which of the two major parties is to rule.

From 1949 to early 1956 the Free Democratic Party was a member of the government coalition. In February 1956, however, a group of Young Turks calling themselves the Duesseldorfers, became fed up with Adenauer's "authoritarian" rule and accused the C.D.U. of "not living up to the true meaning of the word 'coalition.'" In the state of North Rhine-Westphalia the Duesseldorfers engineered a coup whereby the F.D.P. severed its ties with the Christian Democrats, joined forces with the Socialists, and ousted the C.D.U. state government. A few days later, 33 of the 49 Free Democrats in the Bundestag walked out of the government coalition.

The Free Democrats voted for West German membership in NATO but have urged talks with the Soviet Union on reunification. Rejecting what they call "all-or-nothing demands," they propose a flexible, step-by-step procedure without insistence on placing free elections at the head of the reunification agenda. They hold also that to link dis-

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armament and unity obstructs the cause of both Germany and world peace.

While not far from the S.P.D. in foreign policy, the Free Democrats reject any alliance with the Socialists if it means further nationalization of industry. They are all for the free-enterprise system. "Give the people the economic conditions in which they can help themselves," they say, "and they will need no subsidies or giveaways from the government." In general, the Free Democrats are considered closer to the C.D.U. than to the S.P.D., and some observers believe they would be willing to form a coalition with the Christian Democrats if Adenauer withdrew. For the time being, however, the Free Democrats "remain on the fence, their declared goal being to hold the balance between the two great parties and thus enjoy a decisive voice in any future government."<sup>12</sup>

### OTHER MINOR PARTIES AND FRINGE GROUPS

The 16 Free Democrats in the Bundestag who refused to follow their leaders in the break with the C.D.U. formed the Free People's Party and remained in the government coalition. Last January the new party merged with another member of the coalition, the German Party, an ultra-conservative group which derives most of its support from the farm population.

Another minor political group, the Refugee Party, was founded in 1950 by persons expelled from the German eastern territories and by others uprooted by the war. It was a member of the government coalition from 1953 to 1955 but has been losing ground as refugee resettlement has progressed. Regional or fringe groups include also the German Center, Bavarian, and German Reich parties.

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## **International Issues in German Election**

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FOREIGN POLICY QUESTIONS figuring in the election campaign are as important for the United States and its allies as for the Germans. The London *Economist* observed months ago that "The struggle for the next Chancellorship in Germany will be fought out in large part on the terrain

<sup>12</sup> "Liberals Look to Bismarck," *The Economist*, June 15, 1957, p. 969.

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of foreign policy, with initiatives for German unity as the weapons."<sup>13</sup> German reunification, European security, German atomic armament, and world disarmament are all inextricably linked, and U.S. foreign policy would be affected by a change in West Germany's stand on any of these issues.

The division of the German nation weighs more heavily on its people than any other political question. To see Berlin again united and readily accessible, to be able to visit relatives and friends in East Germany, to have the homeland free of foreign troops, to be relieved of fear that Germany might become an atomic battlefield—such yearnings make reunification a prime issue for the Germans. And it is made a crucial question for the Western allies by lack of German agreement on how to attain the goal.

#### WEST'S INSISTENCE ON FREE ALL-GERMAN ELECTIONS

The long-standing policy of the United States, Britain, and France on reunification—formulated in Geneva at the summit and foreign ministers' conferences in 1955—was set forth most recently in the Berlin Declaration of July 29. The declaration stated that reunion of the two parts of Germany was the "only sound basis of a lasting settlement" in Europe. It reiterated that reunification remained the joint responsibility of the four former occupation powers and called again for "free elections throughout Germany."

To allay Soviet fears that a Germany reunited by free elections would constitute a threat to the Red empire, the declaration conceded that appropriate arrangements should be made to protect the "legitimate security interests of all the countries concerned." On the question of German membership in NATO, it pointed out:

The Western powers have never required as a condition of German reunification that a reunified Germany should join the North Atlantic Treaty Organization. It will be for the people . . . themselves to determine through their freely elected government whether they wish to share in the benefits and obligations of the treaty.

If the all-German government, in the exercise of its free choice, should elect to join NATO, the Western powers . . . are prepared to offer, on a basis of reciprocity, to the government of the Soviet Union and the governments of the other countries of Eastern Europe, which would become parties to a European security arrangement, assurances of a significant and far-reaching character.

<sup>13</sup> "The Adenauer Era," *The Economist*, Feb. 2, 1957, p. 352.

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The declaration emphasized, however, that the Western powers could "not contemplate that the existence of NATO itself should constitute the subject of negotiations."

The statement noted that reunification of Germany and conclusion of a European security arrangement would "facilitate the achievement of a comprehensive disarmament agreement" and vice versa. At the same time—in words almost identical with those used in the Eisenhower-Adenauer declaration of May 28—the Berlin Declaration emphasized that any such agreement "presupposes a prior solution of the problem of German reunification."

#### RED DEMAND FOR EAST AND WEST GERMAN PARLEYING

Although the Soviet Union agreed at Geneva in July 1955 that the problem of Germany was the responsibility of the Big Four, and that reunification of the country should be accomplished by means of free elections, Moscow soon reverted to its earlier position. The Russians now insist that reunification is the business exclusively of the two co-equal states, West and East Germany, and can be achieved only by direct negotiations between their governments.

Soviet party chief Khrushchev said at Helsinki, Finland, last June: "We do not have the desire to talk to anyone about the solution of this problem. It is erroneous to believe that the German question can be settled by the Soviet Union and the United States. We have always stated that a solution depends solely on the German people and that other nations should not poke their noses into German affairs." And during a visit to Czechoslovakia the following month, Khrushchev made clear that he viewed the reunification question as separate from the disarmament issue.

Communist policy was officially outlined most recently on July 27, when Premier Otto Grotewohl of East Germany made public the Red plan for reunification of Germany. It called for both East and West Germany to ban production and storing of nuclear weapons, for West Germany to pull out of NATO and for East Germany to leave the Warsaw pact, for West Germany to end military conscription, and for both states to come to an agreement on the size of their armed forces.

Once those conditions had been met, Grotewohl said, a confederation of East and West Germany could be formed



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and direct negotiations undertaken to unify the country. Reuniting Germany by means of free elections would be impossible because one part was "socialistic" while the other was "highly capitalistic, imperialistic, and militaristic." Confederation was the "only possible way" to put the country on the way to complete reunification.

Khrushchev endorsed this line of reasoning during his recent visit to East Germany. Addressing the East German Parliament on Aug. 8, he said that if the Federal Republic "persists in declining any contact with the [East German] government . . . , it only demonstrates thereby its unwillingness to resolve the German question peacefully, and deliberately widens the split of Germany."

#### ADENAUER'S ADHERENCE TO THE WEST'S POSITION

As the government party, Adenauer's Christian Democrats have consistently supported the West on reunification and pledged continued adherence of the Federal Republic to NATO. Foreign Minister von Brentano told the National Press Club in Washington last Mar. 6 that reunion of the two Germanys must be accomplished in the context of an "unbreakable alliance with the free world."

The Adenauer government, in a note to the Soviet Union made public May 27, repudiated a Russian proposal of last October that East and West Germany be joined in a loose confederation pending further negotiations. Bonn said the Federal Republic was prepared at any time, within the framework of proposals made by the West at the Geneva foreign ministers' conference in October 1955, to discuss establishment of an all-European security system which would include a reunited Germany. It added that it had "no hesitation about linking an agreement on the reunification of Germany with contractual obligations reaffirming the renunciation of force."

The Christian Democratic Party lost no time in spurning the most recent Communist proposals on reunification. Adenauer, at a rally on July 28, turned thumbs down on the confederation idea proposed by Grotewohl a day earlier. And a statement issued by C.D.U. party headquarters at Bonn on Aug. 8, following Khrushchev's address before the East German Parliament, asserted that the Soviet leader did "not want the unity of Germany . . . [but] only the unity of Communist states."



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Adenauer and his party have repeatedly promised that West Germany will make its "full contribution" to NATO. In line with that pledge, Adenauer has made it plain several times recently that West Germany's armed forces eventually must be equipped with atomic weapons.

A statement to that effect last spring raised a great storm. Eighteen leading German physicists, including four Nobel Prize winners, said jointly on Apr. 12 that they would not "take any part in the manufacture, testing, or use of atomic weapons," and the municipal councils of Hamburg and Munich came out against equipping the army with tactical atomic arms. The Social Democrats not only opposed A-arms for German troops but also protested making them available to any NATO forces in West Germany. They contended that resort to nuclear armament increased international tension, hampered efforts toward reunification, and threatened to turn Germany into an atomic battleground.<sup>14</sup>

Defense Minister Strauss told the Bundestag, May 10, that the government had not asked for atomic weapons. But he added that, until a general disarmament agreement had been reached, the Federal Republic could not "deny the armed forces of the United States, . . . the backbone of our common defense, the right to have available such weapons—weapons . . . at least on a par with those of the Red Army in the corresponding area." A Christian Democratic resolution stating that West Germany had "no reason for requesting its allies to limit the equipment of troops intended for the defense of the Federal Republic" was adopted, while a Socialist resolution calling on the government to promise not to equip the German army with atomic weapons was rejected.

### **SOCIALIST PLAN TO REUNITE GERMANY OUTSIDE NATO**

The Social Democratic Party has not always been clear about the changes it would make in Germany's foreign policy if it were voted into power, but several of its leaders have indicated the broad lines of the program by which a Socialist government would attempt to reunify Germany. The so-called Ollenhauer Plan, made public May 23, pro-

<sup>14</sup> The Soviet government warned the Federal Republic, Apr. 27, that if it became a "launching site for American nuclear missiles," it might bring on a war that would turn West Germany into a "graveyard." Moscow warned Bonn two months later that if it equipped its forces with nuclear arms, it would ruin prospects for German reunification.

poses reunification within the framework of a concurrently established European security system. It takes note of the contention that German unity and European security, being integral parts of the same problem, must be treated as a whole by the Big Four. It recognizes also that the Soviet Union will insist on discussing the political and military status of a united Germany.<sup>15</sup>

Ollenhauer favors a European collective security system—recognized as a regional arrangement by the United Nations—in place of the existing Eastern and Western military alliances. The newly unified Germany would become a member of that system. In effect, West Germany's membership in NATO would be exchanged for all-Germany's participation in a new collective security arrangement guaranteed by the United States and the Soviet Union.

The Socialists deny that they would have Germans renounce NATO obligations immediately, but they assert that renunciation would have to be considered if and when agreement were reached on reunification, a general European settlement, and a collective security system. Wilhelm Mellies, deputy leader of the S.P.D., recently told an American newspaperman:

We feel that the only chance of getting Soviet consent to German reunion in freedom—and we will never compromise on freedom—is to give some assurance that a reunited Germany will not be in the Western military camp. . . . We would favor release of West Germany from its NATO obligations simultaneously with the release of East Germany from the Warsaw Pact as part of a general scheme for German unification.

Let me make this point clear. If we come into power, we will not repudiate unilaterally Germany's treaty obligations under NATO. We would merely use our influence to induce the Western powers to consider the advisability of favoring our plan for reunion, which would reduce tension and bring freedom as far east as the Oder-Neisse line.<sup>16</sup>

Socialist leaders have said repeatedly that they would not undertake any negotiations directly with the Soviet Union or East Germany. At a news conference on Aug. 8, Ollenhauer reiterated that reunification could come only

<sup>15</sup> Fritz Eriar, one of the Socialists' chief spokesmen, has pointed out that leaving a reunified Germany free to join a military alliance raises an obstacle to reunification. "For if Germany were reunited and could exercise this right, she would join the Atlantic Pact. We know that, and so do the Russians."—Fritz Eriar, "The Struggle for German Reunification," *Foreign Affairs*, April 1956, pp. 384-385. Ollenhauer criticized the Berlin Declaration for "deliberately avoiding" any reference to the military status of a reunified country.

<sup>16</sup> Reported by William Henry Chamberlin in *Wall Street Journal*, Aug. 7, 1957.

through Big Four negotiations and free elections. The Socialists have rejected the Khrushchev proposals for discussions between East and West Germany looking to formation of a confederation.

#### BASIC FACTORS IN MATTER OF GERMAN REUNIFICATION

Several Western observers have suggested that, once the campaign rhetoric is stripped from Christian Democratic and Socialist pronouncements on foreign policy, the differences between the two parties are not substantial. Both favor Big Four negotiations and free elections to reunify Germany. Both reject the Communist formula of direct East-West German talks and confederation. Up to a point, both agree on West Germany's place in NATO. According to Denis Healey, a member of the British House of Commons, "The Christian Democrats are prepared to consider the Social Democratic conception of Germany's military status after reunification, while the Socialists are no longer disposed to demand West Germany's withdrawal from NATO before reunification."<sup>17</sup>

Other observers have contended that no German government, whatever its composition, could afford to reject bona fide offers promising reunification. Claus Jacobi, Washington correspondent of the German news magazine, *Der Spiegel*, has said that if the Germans found it possible to "buy their reunification in peace and freedom at the price of severing all ties with the West, even a German government that might prefer to remain loyal to its Atlantic and West European friends would have to accept the offer."<sup>18</sup>

Otto Kirchheimer, a former State Department German expert, has written that "Future German foreign-policy decisions will not depend on whether the Adenauer cabinet remains in power or is replaced . . . [but] will hinge [rather] on the relative military and overall strength of the various powers and . . . on the record of Soviet performance in the years to come."<sup>19</sup> In the opinion of *The Economist*, "Whatever government emerges from the election will find its policy confined within very narrow limits as long as Russia's general intentions in Europe remain unchanged."<sup>20</sup>

<sup>17</sup> Denis Healey, "The West and the German Elections," *New Leader*, June 24, 1957, pp. 7-8.

<sup>18</sup> Claus Jacobi, "German Paradoxes," *Foreign Affairs*, April 1957, p. 440.

<sup>19</sup> Otto Kirchheimer, "Germany Without Adenauer," *New Leader*, Apr. 16, 1956.

<sup>20</sup> "European Insecurity," *The Economist*, June 1, 1957, p. 764.

